

FAQs for Child Care During COVID-19

Updated 5/11/20: answers added or updated since the 4/10/20 version are in red

Important links for FAQs	
State of Illinois Coronavirus (COVID-19) Response	Coronavirus.illinois.gov
To get support for federal PPP and EIDL applications	https://www.ilgateways.com/financial-opportunities/covid-19-relief
For Child Care Business Resources: COVID-19	COVID-19: Webinar Slides , Toolkit of Child Care Provider Resources , Webinar Recording
For questions related to emergency child care, call or email your local CCR&R	https://www.inccrra.org/about/sdasearch
For more information about unemployment insurance	https://www2.illinois.gov/ides/Pages/default.aspx
Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development (GOECD) Resources	
For the most up-to-date COVID-19 information, guidelines from state agencies, and major early childhood events cancelled or postponed due to COVID-19.	COVID-19 for Early Childhood
For Emergency child care information and resources for providers, essential workers seeking child care, and volunteers who want to offer support.	COVID-19: Emergency Child Care for Providers & Communities
For guidance and FAQs, as well as health, business, child development, mental health, and other resources to support providers during this COVID-19 State of Emergency.	Resources to Support Providers During the Pandemic
For an Emotional Well-being Toolkit to help families manage stressors and promote wellness during these challenging times, in addition to other essential resources.	COVID-19 for Families

Financial Supports

Q: How do I apply for unemployment if I am self-employed, a contractor, or a sole proprietor?

A: On May 11, 2020, the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) launched a way for self-employed individuals, contractors, and sole proprietors to apply for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance. Every unemployed or underemployed individual should file a claim for unemployment benefits through the IDES system. This is true if you are a regular employee, a contractual employee, a self-employed individual, or a sole proprietor, and this is true regardless of any previous advice or information you've been given in the past. If you are a contractual employee or self-employed individual who has not previously been eligible for unemployment, you must file a claim for regular unemployment through the IDES system and be denied before you can apply for the new program, Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA). You can read more here: <https://www2.illinois.gov/ides/pages/learn-about-pua.aspx>

PUA payments are available for claimants who were unemployed due to COVID-19 related reasons beginning the week of February 2, 2020. PUA payments end on December 26, 2020. Claims can be backdated to the first week of unemployment due to COVID-19 related reasons. Contractual or self-employed child care workers may be eligible for PUA even if they are not completely out of work. Under the CARES Act, a weekly PUA benefit amount is determined based on the amount of your income in the past. If you are currently caring for a small number of children and your current weekly income does not exceed your maximum weekly benefit amount based on your past income, you may be eligible for benefits.

For more information, visit the Illinois Department of Employment Security website at <https://www2.illinois.gov/ides/Pages/default.aspx>

Temporary Attendance Exemption Policy / Child Care Assistance Program

Q: Has the attendance exemption policy been extended to May?

Yes, with some additional changes on the exemption form. The new form will be mailed with provider certificates which go out mid-May and will be made available through CCR&R's before it is time to bill.

Q: Which providers qualify for the 30% enhanced payment rate?

Emergency care providers that were licensed centers or licensed homes, or some license-exempt centers (e.g. churches) prior to COVID-19 may qualify. License-exempt home providers will not get the add-on.

Q: When will providers be paid the additional 30% to daily rates for providing care to essential workers?

The 30% add-on was effective beginning with April services and has been extended for the service month of May. Payments for April services are processed beginning on May 1 based on submittal of a CCAP billing certificate. Providers were required to register with their local CCR&R as an emergency care provider and to report their attendance of children of essential workers in order to receive the add-on.

The 30% will be calculated on the daily rate prior to any additional add-ons (Site Administrative, QRS, Special Needs...) or deductions (Union Dues...). The add-on is not limited to cases approved through the Prioritized Essential Worker application.

Q: If I am a licensed provider, will I get paid for May?

If you are open and providing emergency child care you will be paid for services. If you are closed, you may choose to have yourself and your staff apply for Pandemic Unemployment rather than bill the state for CCAP children under the attendance exemption. You should look at both options to determine which is better for you financially. You can find more information about the different Pandemic Unemployment programs at the Illinois Department of Employment Security: <https://www2.illinois.gov/ides/Pages/default.aspx>.

Q: Whom should I contact if I did not receive the amount that I billed for in March?

Check your CCR&R's website for the best way to contact them during the pandemic.

Q: My program was approved for a PPP loan through the SBA. Are we now disqualified from receiving the temporary attendance exemption for CCAP?

You are not disqualified but you may not use CCAP revenue to cover the same costs that your PPP loan covers. If your loan covers some of the same costs, you should reduce the days of care you bill the state for CCAP so that you aren't receiving double payments for the same cost. If there are questions, please direct them to either your local CCR&R: <https://www.inccrra.org/about/sdasearch>

Emergency Child Care

Q: Who is defined as an essential worker as of May 1?

The new, widened definition of Essential Workers can be found in the Governor's amended Stay at Home Executive Order at the following link <https://www2.illinois.gov/Documents/ExecOrders/2020/ExecutiveOrder-2020-32.pdf> beginning on page 6 (Items #7-12). Those who are newly eligible to work outside of the home as of May 1 are allowed to enroll their child in child care.

Q: Where can I find the definition of Priority Essential Worker in order to qualify for the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) for Priority Essential Workers?

Please see page 7 of the application:

<http://www.dhs.state.il.us/OneNetLibrary/27893/documents/CoronavirusInfo/COVID-19-Child-Care-Application-4-3-2020.pdf>

Q: With neighboring states "opening up" before Illinois, could parents working in those states be considered "essential" and send their children to our emergency child care settings?

Ultimately, it will be up to each program's discretion. We won't challenge another state's definition of essential worker; however, providers must still adhere to Illinois' emergency child care guidelines for providing care during COVID-19. Additionally, the Illinois definition of Priority Essential Worker will be determinative for CCAP eligibility.

Q: Who has to wear masks and when?

Beginning on May 1, individuals will be required to wear a face covering or a mask when in a public place where they can't maintain a six-foot social distance. Face coverings will be required in public indoor spaces, such as stores. This new requirement applies to all individuals over the age of two who are able to medically tolerate a face covering or a mask.

This requirement means that parents and children over age two and able to medically tolerate a face covering should wear one when arriving and departing from child care.

Additionally, the CDC has recommended that, when feasible, staff members and older children should wear face coverings within the facility. Face coverings are especially important in situations when social distancing can't be maintained. Cloth face coverings should NOT be put on babies and children under age two because of the danger of suffocation.

Masks should not be worn during nap time, and cloth face coverings used by staff and children should be washed/changed daily, if possible.

Q: Face masks for young children is going to be hard. Are there any resources for this?

We recognize that this order to keep everyone safe is going to be particularly hard with young children. This resource was created with guidance on using face masks with children: <https://illinoisapp.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Masking.pdf> and we continue to add resources to the GOECD website regarding this topic.

Q: Is there new Illinois guidance on how to keep children and providers safe while currently in care?

In accordance with the CDC guidelines, this document was created by GOECD, DHS, ISBE, and DCFS and approved by DHS to give emergency child care providers guidance on providing care safely in Illinois: [Comprehensive Health Guidance for Those Providing Child Care to Essential Workers During the COVID-19 State of Emergency](#)

Q: My child care provider closed. How can I locate a second provider? Once I find alternate care, how do I add that provider to my CCAP for Priority Essential Workers form?

To find emergency child care in your area, call (888) 228-1146 or visit [COVID-19 Emergency Provider Search](#)

Contact your local CCR&R for help. Find your local CCR&R here:

<https://www.inccrra.org/about/sdasearch>

Q: Is the Emergency Child Care Stipend for emergency child care providers still available?

The ability to apply for the One Time Emergency Child Care Stipend will end May 15, 2020. Emergency child care programs that are providing emergency child care through May 15, 2020 are eligible to apply. Stipend applications must be submitted to ecgrants@inccrra.org by Tuesday, May 19th. Eligibility and applications can be found at <https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/OECD/Documents/Emergency%20Child%20Care%20Stipend%20Program.pdf>. Applications received after 5/19/2020 will not be processed.

Q: When can self-employed contractors and sole proprietors be eligible for unemployment?

On or around May 11, 2020, the Pandemic Unemployment option for self-employed contractors and sole proprietors should be available via IDES. IDES notes that everyone in this category must apply to regular Unemployment Insurance first before applying for the new program. GOECD will post information to the “Business Resources” section of our website once it becomes available: <https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/OECD/Pages/Resources-for-Providers.aspx>

Emergency Child Care FAQs as of 4/10/20

Temporary Attendance Exemption Policy

Q: How should providers that typically submit attendance through the telephone registry system submit the Temporary Attendance Exemption forms?

Providers entering payment information through the IVR Telephone Billing System should enter 100% of their eligible days.

After entry of the payment on the IVR, licensed home provider (762, 763) will need to send the COVID-19 Attendance Exemption Form to the CCR&R for each applicable month that they were not providing care or attendance is less than 20% of expected.

Providers who are caring for children of Essential Workers who are still working and need more care than approved should:

- Enter 100% of Eligible Days through IVR.
- Complete and submit the Certificate and the COVID-19 Attendance Exemption Form (Provider Types 760-763) to the CCR&R with the actual days attended.
- CCR&Rs will then enter a Supplemental Payment for any days not entered on the IVR.
- Check your local Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) <https://www.inccra.org/about/sdasearch> for more questions.

Q: If we have no kids, will we still be paid for the month of April?

CCAP providers that are closed or have no attendance in April may submit an attendance exemption form to be paid for all eligible days in April; the waiver requires that the provider attest that they have continued to pay all staff through the month. Providers are encouraged to fully investigate the federal emergency relief funds available to individuals and small businesses. This includes expanded unemployment benefits, emergency grants, forgivable loans, and refundable tax credits. These options may be more beneficial to you and/or your staff than claiming the attendance exemption. More information can be found here: <https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/OECD/Pages/COVID-19.aspx>

Q: If I completed a temporary attendance form in March, will I need to complete one for April?

Yes. April Attendance Exemption forms will be mailed with the April certificates. Further guidance will be forthcoming. Please monitor <https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/OECD/Pages/For-Communities.aspx> for updates.

Q: Will the attendance exemption policy be extended to May if child care is still mandated to be closed?

The emergency policy is in place for the services in the months of March and April 2020 unless extended through written policy. This is an extraordinary event which makes it difficult to foresee too far in advance if there will be an extension. Please monitor <https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/OECD/Pages/For-Communities.aspx> for updates. As noted above, providers are strongly encouraged to explore the various federal relief programs available through the CARES Act.

Emergency Child Care

Emergency Child Care Center: Application, License, and Exemption

Q: What documentation will DCFS require if I apply for an Emergency Child Care Center license?

In addition to the license application, you will be asked to submit a list of staff that will be working at the center (including background check applications for any new staff), your risk management plan, guidance and discipline policy, and medication policy. It is very important that you provide DCFS with accurate contact information and are reachable by DCFS staff so that they are able to follow up with questions or requests for additional information quickly.

Q: At what rate will emergency child care centers that previously were licensed child care centers be paid for CCAP families? At what rate will homes be paid?

Emergency care providers (excluding exempt homes FFN), registered with their CCR&R and serving essential workers will be paid at a 30% increase over the per day daily rates that were approved in January 2020 for those children receiving emergency care. More guidance from IDHS is forthcoming.

Q: When should I expect my child care information to appear in the COVID-19 Emergency Provider Search?

Once you submit the [emergency child care form](#) your information will be processed (Monday - Friday) and appear in the COVID-19 Emergency Provider Search within 24 hours of processing.

Q: How can I get additional supplies to support operations of an emergency child care center, such as toilet paper and soap?

Applications for a stipend is available to providers through their local Child Care Resource & Referral agency. Local CCR&Rs are also working with programs to match them with local availability of supplies (<https://www.inccrra.org/about/sdasearch>). For more information on stipends, visit:

<https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/OECD/Documents/Emergency%20Child%20Care%20Stipend%20Program.pdf>

Q: Is there a way for owners and directors who are interested in remaining open to connect with child care workers interested in working?

We recommend contacting your local CCR&R, as they are closely monitoring sites that remain open, families in need of care, as well as staff looking for work.

Q: Can Head Start/Early Head Start providers be emergency care providers?

The State welcomes and encourages Head Start/Early Head Start providers to provide emergency child care, both to the children enrolled in their existing program and other families of essential workers in their communities. However, programs must be careful to follow federal guidance on the use of Head Start funds and other resources as well as their obligations to continue to meet the needs of their enrolled families.

Q: If I am an essential worker working from home, am I eligible for emergency child care and CCAP?

No. While we understand the difficulty of working from home while also caring for children, children remain safest in the home. Emergency child care is being reserved only for situations where there is no other option.

Q: If we decide to close now, will we still receive the stipend?

Providers need to have been open and serving children at the time of the application for the stipend.

Q: Are restriction being lifted from all ECBG programs to be able to apply to provide emergency child care?

Early Childhood Block Grant programs, including Preschool for All and Prevention Initiative, that have chosen to provide Emergency Child Care now have added flexibility to use their grant funding to serve children beyond those typically enrolled in their programs. Grantees should consult with their Principal Consultant at ISBE to discuss any modifications to their budget that they may need.

Emergency Child Care: Child Care Homes

Q: Should emergency child care centers and homes charge families who are not recipients of CCAP?

Effective April 1st, [essential workers](#) in health care, human services, essential government services & essential infrastructure now qualify for Illinois' Child Care Assistance Program regardless of family income, meaning the state will cover most, if not all, of the cost of care.

The application with more information is available at the following link:

<http://www.dhs.state.il.us/OneNetLibrary/27893/documents/CoronavirusInfo/COVID-19-Child-Care-Application-4-3-2020.pdf>

In addition, an application for stipend funds to support emergency child care operations, is available at the following link:

<https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/OECD/Documents/Emergency%20Child%20Care%20Stipend%20Program.pdf>

Emergency child care providers are encouraged but not required to accept CCAP.

Q: As an emergency child care center receiving CCAP, am I required to pay all staff members who are not coming to work?

To continue to receive CCAP payments, providers are expected to continue to pay all staff. Some programs have been providing additional incentive pay to their staff who continue to work as emergency child care staff.

Q: Do both parents have to be essential workers in order to qualify for emergency child care? What if both parents are essential workers but work different shifts?

In a 2-parent household, both parents have to be essential workers who are both working outside of the home to qualify for emergency child care. Eligibility does take into consideration sleep time for situations in which one or both essential workers are working night shifts and need care for their children during their day.

Emergency Child Care: General

Q: How can child care facilities access PPE (e.g. masks, gowns, or gloves)?

Emergency child care providers are able to apply for and use stipend funds to purchase personal protective equipment. To apply for a stipend, visit:

<https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/OECD/Documents/Emergency%20Child%20Care%20Stipend%20Program.pdf>

IDPH encourages the use of common materials that providers may already have available, such as creating cloth face masks or using a trash bag in lieu of a disposable gown when doing arrival temperature checks.

Child Care Assistance Program

Q: Are we expected to receive CCAP payments late this month?

Child care payments are not delayed at this time. Typical processing timelines are expected to be in place for this month (April).

Q: Will there be any expanded guidance for emergency child care (center-based sites) regarding blending funding for paying staff during this time (HS, ECBG and/or CCAP)?

We are not able to provide one set of guidance as situations may vary. For the ECBG, grantees should consult with their ISBE Principal Consultant. Head Start grantees should consult with their Head Start federal officer.

Q: If we are a for-profit child care center who did not previously accept CCAP, can we apply for CCAP for our essential workers based on the new April 1st rule?

Expanded CCAP eligibility is being provided as a benefit for those that are considered to be Priority Essential Workers and **have no other options for care**. If a parent applies for CCAP and selects you as their provider, you must be operating with DCFS guidelines for emergency care and must be registered with your local CCR&R agency as an emergency care provider in order to be paid for April services. This benefit is only available while the Governor's Stay At Home Executive Order is in effect.

Financial Supports

Q: Do you have to be receiving CCAP or be licensed to be eligible for state/federal loans and financial support programs?

No.

Q: How do I apply for financial supports? If we are ordered to close and do not choose to reopen as an emergency child care center, what financial assistance options are available to my center and my staff?

To learn about the supports available, view the two webinars conducted by GOECD and available here on our website: <https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/OECD/Pages/For-Communities.aspx>

If you would like support with completing an application for the Paycheck Protection Program or Economic Injury Disaster Loan, please visit the [Gateways website](#) and complete the screening survey to be connected with an advisor.

Federal Resources:

The Families First Coronavirus Response Act, [HR6201](#), includes supports for small businesses such as paid leave, unemployment insurance flexibilities, food stamps flexibilities, and expanded small business loans.

- *Paid Leave*: The law provides paid sick leave and emergency Family Medical Leave, including for families staying home with children due to school closures. Providers must pay wages to staff on leave using money they would have paid in payroll taxes. Providers can apply for refund if leave wages are larger than payroll taxes for the quarter: <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/treasury-irs-and-labor-announce-plan-to-implement-coronavirus-related-paid-leave-for-workers-and-tax-credits-for-small-and-midsize-businesses-to-swiftly-recover-the-cost-of-providing-coronavirus>
- *Unemployment Insurance*: The law suspends work search requirement and one week waiting period for unemployment insurance: <https://www2.illinois.gov/ides/Pages/COVID-19-and-Unemployment-Benefits.aspx>
- *Food Stamps (SNAP)*: The law suspends work requirements and extends certification period for SNAP (food stamps): <https://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=33698>

Also, see [slide 11](#) for more information.

<https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/OECD/Documents/Child%20Care%20Provider%20Small%20Business%20Resources%20Webinar%20200405.pdf>

Economic Injury Disaster Loans from Small Business Administration

- Non-profit and for-profit businesses are eligible; as well as independent contractors, including self-employed family child care workers (additional paperwork may be required)
- Employers can receive an emergency \$10,000 advance for payroll, rent, or mortgage within the first 3 days of applying that does not need to be repaid
- Loan requests can be up to \$2 million
- Interest rates: 3.75% (for-profits), 2.75% (non-profits)
- Repayment period: 30 years
- **Application link:** <https://covid19relief.sba.gov/#/>
- **More information:** <https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/loans/coronavirus-relief-options>
- **For questions,** contact the SBA disaster assistance customer service center at 1-800-659-2955 or email disastercustomerservice@sba.gov

Paycheck Protection Program (PPP)

- Available to for-profit and non-profits with 500 or fewer employees per location AND independent contractors (applications will be accepted starting April 10, 2020)
- Support for up to 8 weeks of payroll costs (including benefits), rent, mortgage interest, utilities
- If at least 75% of funds are used on payroll and staff are retained for 8 weeks, funds used on all the above costs will be forgiven
- Loans are retroactive 2/15/20-6/30/20; can be used to hire back staff that had been laid off, can be up to 2.5 times a provider's average monthly payroll costs
- No fees, 6 months of payment deferral, and portions of the loan that are not forgiven have a 1% interest rate over 2 years
- **Loans will be granted on a first-come, first-served basis, so it is important to act quickly!**
- **Don't allow the fear of funds running out stop you from applying! There is always the possibility that additional funding could become available.**
- **More information:** <https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/loans/coronavirus-relief-options/paycheck-protection-program-ppp> and <https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/top-priorities/cares-act/assistance-for-small-businesses>
- **For questions,** call 1-800-252-2923 or email CEO.support@illinois.gov

Employee Retention Credit

- For-profit and non-profits who have been closed or who have seen a 50% reduction in quarterly receipts
- For providers who are NOT using the Paycheck Protection Program

- Employers can receive a tax credit of \$5,000 per employee through 12/31/20 using funds they would have otherwise paid to the IRS as payroll taxes
- Can file for advance refund if the credit is more than the business would have paid in payroll taxes
- There will be a tax form for the credit available – Form 941
- Employers can claim the Employee Retention Credit for any employee who has qualified wages; employees themselves may not claim this credit
- **More information:** <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/faqs-employee-retention-credit-under-the-cares-act>

State Resources:

Emergency Small Business Grants and Loans Assistance

- Intended for small businesses with fewer than 50 employees
- Most of the loans require that recipients pay employees, though funds from the loan can be used to meet these requirements
- Small businesses working capital supported by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO):
 - o IL Small Business Emergency Loan Fund (loan):
<https://www2.illinois.gov/dceo/SmallBizAssistance/Pages/IllinoisSmallBusinessEmergencyLoanFund.aspx>
 - o Downstate Small Business Stabilization Program (grant):
<https://www2.illinois.gov/dceo/CommunityServices/CommunityInfrastructure/Pages/DownstateSmBizStabilization.aspx>
- Chicago Small Business Resiliency Fund:
<https://www.connect2capital.com/partners/chicago-small-business-resiliency-fund/>

Additional Business Resources:

- [Bipartisan Policy Center \(BPC\) - COVID-19 Early Childhood Resources](#)
- [BPC - Unemployment Compensation: the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act \(CARES Act\) \(specifically for child care providers\)](#)
- [Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity \(DCEO\) - Emergency Small Business Grants & Loan Assistance](#)
- Attention Illinois [hashtag#SmallBusiness owners: To better support you during this critical time, you can direct your business inquiries about U.S. Small Business Administration loans via: - Phone \(1-800-252-2923\) - Email CEO.support@illinois.gov.](#)
- IDHS & GOECD - COVID-19 Child Care Business Practices and Resources: [Webinar Slides and Webinar Recording \(3/23/2020\)](#)

Q: Is it the Governor’s intention that Executive Order 10 qualify as a State Isolation order and therefore a qualifying reason for leave under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA)?

The Governor's Stay-at-Home order, encouraging limited movement by the public, is *not* a basis for leave under the FFCRA. A quarantine or isolation order is a directive from a public health official or a medical provider to remain homebound unless receiving medical care due to a COVID-19 diagnosis (i.e. positive test or suspected infection).

Unemployment Insurance Information

What is it?

- All unemployment insurance is administered by IDES, including federal supports
- Work search requirement and weeklong waiting period have been waived
- Unemployment insurance expanded by 13 additional weeks
- Unemployment insurance amount increased by \$600 per week per person through 7/31/20

Who can use it?

- All previously eligible individuals, **plus self-employed contractors** (through 12/31/20). **Home child care providers may be eligible!**

How can I apply?

- File for unemployment online at <http://www.ides.illinois.gov> or call 800-244-5631 with questions

Unemployment Questions

Q: Do staff at emergency child care programs still qualify for Unemployment if their program is not receiving full funding from families?

Unemployment insurance is only accessible to staff who are unemployed. If staff have been laid off due to the closure of the business, they would still qualify. Please refer to this guidance from IDES: <https://www2.illinois.gov/ides/Pages/COVID-19-and-Unemployment-Benefits.aspx>

Q: Can you receive Unemployment if you work for a non-profit?

Yes. The Illinois Department of Unemployment Security describes eligibility for unemployment insurance here: <https://www2.illinois.gov/ides/Pages/COVID-19-and-Unemployment-Benefits.aspx>

Q: Can you apply for Unemployment and other financial supports (e.g. Payroll Protection Loan, or Emergency Disaster Loan)?

- Employers may apply for Paycheck Protection Program or Economic Injury Disaster Loan if they meet the requirements for each loan; employers may not apply for unemployment insurance.
- Employees may apply for unemployment insurance if they meet the requirements described by the Illinois Department of Employment Security; employees may not apply for Paycheck Protection Program or Economic Injury Disaster Loan.
- Self-employed individuals or contractors may apply for Paycheck Protection Program beginning on April 10; they may apply for the Economic Injury Disaster Loan now; and

they may apply for unemployment insurance after the Illinois Department of Employment Security releases guidance on how they may do so under the CARES Act. Please check back to the IDES website for guidance:

<https://www2.illinois.gov/ides/Pages/COVID-19-and-Unemployment-Benefits.aspx>

Q: If staff are offered emergency child care or front desk hours and they refuse, do they qualify for Unemployment?

The Illinois Department of Unemployment Security describes eligibility for unemployment insurance here: <https://www2.illinois.gov/ides/Pages/COVID-19-and-Unemployment-Benefits.aspx>

Other

Q: What happens to child care applications and pending documents in February? That have not been processed. It was said processing might be delayed as far July 2020.

All documents received prior to the COVID-19 outbreak are being processed but timelines are delayed. Please check with your local CCR&R by phone or check their website for status updates.

Emergency Child Care FAQs as of 3/29/20

Temporary Attendance Exemption Policy

Q: If I choose not to open to provide care to children of essential workers, can I still get paid for my CCAP families?

Yes. Use the [COVID-19 Attendance Exemption Form, available here](#), to receive an exemption due to the pandemic. You must certify that you agree to pay your staff for all scheduled work hours, regardless of closure or reductions in services, to receive the exemption and continue to receive CCAP payments. License exempt home providers are not required to complete the form.

Providers are encouraged to fully investigate the federal emergency relief funds available to individuals and small businesses. This includes expanded unemployment benefits, emergency grants, forgivable loans, and refundable tax credits. These options may be more beneficial to you and/or your staff than claiming the attendance exemption. More information can be found here: <https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/OECD/Pages/COVID-19.aspx>

Q: What does “paying staff” mean related to the temporary attendance exemption policy?

Programs are expected to continue to pay all staff (including part-time staff) each month at least the average amount they were paid in the previous month. Federal resources, including the Small Business Administration’s Economic Injury Disaster Loans and tools to support paid leave can help make this possible for providers. For more information, see the Financial Supports section of this FAQ.

If you operate a day care home and do not employ staff in addition to yourself, you must only continue to pay yourself.

Q: Does a provider have to charge parents who pay private tuition in order to receive the attendance exemption for CCAP parents?

No.

Q: Where should I send my attendance exemption form and monthly certificates for reimbursement?

Check your local Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R)

<https://www.inccrra.org/about/sdasearch> website to see how they are accepting paperwork during COVID-19. They will have instructions on their website or phone message for how they are accepting certificates and exemption forms.

Q: If I close, is my number of eligible days the number of days I could have been open or the number of days I was open in the month?

The number of eligible days is based on the number of days you could have been open.

Child Care Closures

Q: Am I able to continue to charge tuition while my child care is closed?

Child care programs should consult the agreement or contract they have with parents. The state does not regulate this area.

Q: Can private child care centers and homes reopen on April 8 when the Stay at Home Order is lifted?

The current Stay at Home Order extends until April 30th. The Governor is committed to keeping Illinois residents safe and slowing the spread of COVID-19 throughout the state, therefore the Stay at Home Order could be further extended as this public health emergency continues. Monitor <https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/OECD/Pages/For-Communities.aspx> for updates.

Emergency Child Care

Emergency Child Care Center: Application, License, and Exemption

Q: Where can emergency child care centers be located?

Anywhere licensed child care centers and license-exempt child care centers can be located. This includes child care centers, schools, community-based organizations such as churches and social services organizations, health care facilities or other workplaces for essential workers, and more.

Q: Can a license-exempt program located in a school or elsewhere reopen as an emergency child care center to serve essential workers?

Yes. There is no need to submit an application. License-exempt programs are allowed to operate in schools, institutions of higher education, and federal buildings; [click here](#) for more guidance.

Q: I've applied to become an emergency child care center. How will I know when I've been approved? What is the timeline for approval?

Per DCFS Emergency rules ([click here to read](#)), the Department will issue an emergency license to the applicant following review and approval of a center's application for an Emergency Day Care Program license. Centers that were already licensed pursuant to Section 407.50 will be granted a five-business day grace period during which they may operate while pending approval of the Emergency Day Care Program license.

Q: Is there a deadline to apply to become an emergency child care center?

No, there is no deadline.

Q: If I am a licensed child care center and I become an emergency child care center, will I lose my previous license? Will I have to reapply for my license later?

No. Centers will not lose their license to operate; they will be able to operate under their current license when the public health emergency has ended.

Q: Can emergency child care centers offer mixed-age groups? How do these rules apply to school-aged emergency child care, including full-day care as schools remain closed?

If you have mixed age groups, you need to follow the ratio for the lowest age group present.

Q: If I choose to remain open as an emergency child care center or as a child care home, am I required to accept children of essential workers outside my original enrollment?

No. However, if you have available slots, we ask that you consider serving children of essential workers outside of your original enrollment for as long as the public health emergency continues. Many essential workers need child care so that they can go to work serving and protecting their communities, and they need safe, caring child care providers like you to help them do that.

Q: What is the maximum number of children that an emergency child care center can serve?

As a guideline during the public health emergency, we encourage emergency child care centers to enroll fewer than 50 children; however, we understand that there may be some cases in which emergency centers in areas of high community need may be able to accept more children. In all cases children should be cared for in stable groups of 10 or fewer, and care should be taken that groups of children do not interact, including at drop-off and dismissal.

Q: Where can I report that I am open as an emergency child care provider?

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc-rPw5zwqr3SbBuLwpS4JfXUzHtgf9yW-uoX44GiWGDqMRcQ/viewform> - this form helps CCR&R's fill the early learning helpline and online search for emergency child care and it will be required for programs wanting to apply for additional funds.

Q: What are the qualifications requirements for the staff of an emergency child care center?

Emergency child care center staff must meet the qualifications described in DCFS rules for Emergency Day Care Centers ([click here to read](#)). Each classroom must be staffed with at least one Early Childhood Teacher or assistant, or School-age Worker Assistant.

Early Childhood Teachers must:

- Be at least 19 years old
- Have a high school diploma or GED
- Have either:
 - o 60 semester hours of credits from an accredited college or university, with six semester hours in early childhood coursework, or
 - o One year of child development experience and 30 semester hours of credits from an accredited college or university, with six semester hours in early childhood coursework, or
 - o Completion of a Child Development Associate credential or Certified Childcare Professional credential

Early Childhood Assistants and School-Age Assistants must:

- Have a high school diploma or GED

In addition to the above qualifications, staff must meet a subset of the general requirements for personnel; these are outlined in the quick reference guide here:

<https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/OECD/Documents/Quick%20Reference%20of%20Rules%20for%20Emergency%20Child%20Care%20Centers.pdf>

Providers who are in a higher risk group for COVID19, such as those over age 65 or with a pre-existing health condition, are discouraged from providing care during the time of the public health emergency. Individuals over age 65 and/or with underlying health conditions are at greater risk for complications from COVID-19 and are asked to be extra vigilant about maintaining social distance and avoiding potential exposure to the virus.

Q: Can emergency child care centers hire floater teachers if they go between multiple rooms?

No. Per DCFS Emergency rules ([click here to read](#)), child care providers shall remain solely with one group of children.

Q: What training resources are available to license-exempt emergency child care staff?

A wealth of training opportunities are available on the Gateways to Opportunity i-Learning website. This includes the “Child Development, Health, and Safety Basics” course, which must be completed by license-exempt home child care providers in order to receive Child Care Assistance Program subsidy. Another fast introductory training option is the package of online modules that make up the Gateways Early Childhood Education Credential Level 1. Access all Gateways trainings here: <https://courses.inccrra.org/>

Emergency Child Care: Child Care Homes

Q: If I am operating a day care home or group day care home, does the six-child limit include my own children? Can the children served come from multiple families?

Yes, in a day care home or group day care home your children count in the six-child limit. The children you serve can be from multiple families.

Q: Can day care homes continue to provide services to children of essential workers in multiple shifts? If so, is the group size limit six children per shift or per day?

For homes that care for children in multiple shifts, the group size limit is six children per shift (including the provider's own children), so long as the groups of children do not overlap.

Q: Can Day Care Homes offer care for children of essential workers during the COVID-19 public health emergency?

Yes. Day care homes may serve up to six children as a legally license-exempt home.

Emergency Child Care: Essential Workers

Q: Can the children of non-essential workers receive care in an emergency child care center or home?

No, only the children of parents or guardians who are essential workers can receive care at an Emergency Child Care Program.

Q: How will emergency child care centers be required to document that children's parents/guardians are essential workers?

A written enrollment application is required to be on file for each child; which includes the work hours of the parents and the name, address, and telephone number of the parents' places of employment.

Q: What type of paperwork will be required for a child of an essential worker to enroll in emergency child care?

Emergency child care providers may use their own enrollment forms for their programs, so long as they are sure to capture all of the information required for record keeping described in the Emergency Child Care rules ([click here to read](#)).

Q: Must CCAP families who are essential workers complete a Change of Provider form if they find another placement?

No, a Change of Provider form is not needed. Instead, the parent/guardian contacts their local CCR&R and request to add a provider to their CCAP. This will allow their current provider (who is closed) to continue to be paid through the exemption and the new provider to be paid while providing care.

Q: Must all parents/guardians be essential workers in order to receive emergency child care? Must essential workers work outside the home in order to receive emergency child care?

Yes, the parents/guardians with whom a child is living must be essential workers and work outside of the home to access emergency child care.

Q: How can essential workers find and enroll in emergency child care?

The Early Learning Helpline of the CCR&R System is dedicated to support essential workers seeking emergency child care: Call toll-free (888) 228-1146 between 9:00am – 3:00pm. Or you can search online at <https://emergencycare.inccrra.org>

Emergency Child Care: General

Q: Is there guidance on how staff at emergency child care centers can remain safe? Where can providers find risk management and health and safety guidance?

Please visit the GOECD Emergency Child Care for Communities & Providers page (<https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/OECD/Pages/For-Communities.aspx>) for a tool kit of resources that includes the following guidelines on cleaning and disinfecting from the CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html>

Child Care Assistance Program

Q: What about providers who receive subsidy through the Department of Children and Family Services?

DCFS will continue to pay providers for all eligible days for child care through the time that programs are closed for COVID-19, so long as the provider submits a waiver form and attests that they are continuing to pay staff. Providers may use the same Temporary Attendance Exemption Form used by IDHS for DCFS CCAP payments. This form has been mailed with this month's enrollment forms to providers who receive payment for day care through DCFS.

Child and Adult Care Food Program

Q: What changes or flexibilities can I expect for CACFP? Will providers who have closed be partially paid through the food program?

Even with program closures, we strongly encourage you to develop a plan for ensuring that children in your program that receive free and reduced-price meals through the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) continue to receive meals. You may wish to reach out to your local school district to explore partnering with them or contact the ISBE Nutrition Department at CNP@isbe.net to determine how to provide additional meals in your community.

Financial Supports

See above for more up to date Federal and State Resources.

State Resources:

Temporary Attendance Exemption Policy: <https://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=123118>

- For child care centers and homes receiving CCAP, a temporary attendance exemption policy has been put in place. Centers and homes may apply for an exemption from the 80% attendance requirement due to COVID-19 if they certify that they will continue to pay staff.

Q: Are companies with <50 or >500 employees eligible for the paid leave provisions of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act?

Employers with more than 500 employees are exempt from the paid leave provisions outlined in the federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act. Employers with fewer than 50 employees are eligible for the paid leave provisions, including the ability to use payroll taxes to cover paid leave and to request a reimbursement if paid leave costs are greater than payroll taxes owed. Employers with fewer than 50 employees are also eligible for an exemption from the requirements to provide leave to care for a child whose school is closed or child care is unavailable in cases where the viability of the business is threatened. Read more here:

<https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/treasury-irs-and-labor-announce-plan-to-implement-coronavirus-related-paid-leave-for-workers-and-tax-credits-for-small-and-midsize-businesses-to-swiftly-recover-the-cost-of-providing-coronavirus>